

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-10 and 13-42 were examined in the Office Action under reply. Claims 1, 3-5, 13-15, 21-28 and 38-42 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e). Claim 29 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a). These rejections are believed to be overcome for reasons discussed below.

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the withdrawal of the previous double patenting rejection, as well as the previous art rejections. Applicants note that claims 6-10, 16-20 and 30-37 are considered by the Examiner to be free of the prior art.

Overview of the Above Amendments:

Claims 13-16 and 21-26 have been canceled and claims 1, 17 and 19 amended. In particular, claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the recitations from claim 16, which claim was indicated as allowable over the art. Claims 17 and 19 have been amended to depend from claim 1 rather than from cancelled claims. Amendment of claims 1, 17 and 19 and cancellation of claims 13-16 and 21-26 is made without prejudice, without intent to abandon any originally claimed subject matter, and without intent to acquiesce in any rejection of record. Applicants reserve the right to bring the canceled claims again in a related application.

Rejections Over the Art:

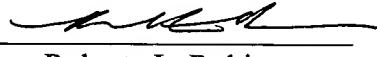
Claims 1, 3-5, 13-15, 21-28 and 38-42 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,083,763 to Balch (“Balch”). Additionally, claim 29 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Balch in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,316,918 to Skouv et al. (“Skouv”). Applicants submit that the claims are patentable over the cited art. Nevertheless, claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the recitations of claim 16 which was not subject to the above rejections. All pending claims either directly or ultimately depend from claim 1. Thus, these bases for rejection have been overcome.

CONCLUSION

Applicants respectfully submit that the claims define a patentable invention. Accordingly, a Notice of Allowance is believed in order and is respectfully requested. If the Examiner notes any further matters which he believes may be resolved by a telephone interview, he is encouraged to contact the undersigned by telephone at 650-493-3400.

Respectfully submitted,

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